

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

MARVIN J. SOUTHARD, D.S.W.  
*Director*

ROBIN KAY, Ph.D.  
*Chief Deputy Director*

RODERICK SHANER, M.D.  
*Medical Director*



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

GLORIA MOLINA  
MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
ZEV YAROSLAVSKY  
DON KNABE  
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

## DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

550 SOUTH VERMONT AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90020

Reply To: (213) 738-4601  
Fax: (213) 386-1297

<http://dmh.lacounty.gov>

May 25, 2010

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.  
Director of Mental Health

SUBJECT: **REPORT ON IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AS A RESULT OF THE RELEASE OF INMATES FROM STATE PRISONS**

This memo will provide you with information recently received by Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) regarding the protocol established by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) for inmates with mental illness who are released from State prison on Non-Revocable Parole (NRP) status that have a need for continuing mental health services. Information regarding actions taken by DMH is also included.

### **Background**

During the March 2, 2010 Board meeting, representatives of the CDCR reported on several measures undertaken in response to a federal court order to reduce the current State prison and parole population by 60,000 by the end of 2011. A provision that will reclassify the status of 7,700 parolees in Los Angeles County to that of NRP was initiated on January 25, 2010, by CDCR. This provision eliminated the supervision requirement as well as eligibility for mental health services provided by the Parole Outpatient Clinic (POC) system for those on NRP.

### **Incarcerated Individuals Slated for Early Release – CDCR Protocol**

In reports to your Board, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) staff differentiated several populations of inmates affected by the new provisions. One group is composed of individuals who were incarcerated at the time the provision was enacted, who were to be released early on NRP status. During their presentation to your Board, representatives of the CDCR indicated that they would provide 30 days' prior notification of inmates' release to Los Angeles County. CDCR staff further indicated that a comprehensive referral packet would be provided several weeks prior to inmates' release in order to ensure continuity of mental health care for those treated for mental illness while incarcerated. It was anticipated that inmates identified for early release would begin to leave State correctional facilities in April. DMH was asked for a single point of contact and provided that information to the CDCR.

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"*

Each Supervisor  
May 25, 2010  
Page 2

Since April 1, 2010, DMH has received only 2 referrals from CDCR, despite frequent inquiries. Minimal clinical information was provided for only one of these individuals. Based upon information provided by CDCR within the last 10 days, DMH has serious concerns that inmates with mental illness that are in need of ongoing mental health services and supports are being released early on NRP status without prior notification. According to information provided by CDCR, approximately 14% of the 2,000 individuals slated for early release on NRP status require ongoing mental health services. We are concerned that the lack of referral information precludes us from providing adequate outreach or coordination of care for individuals who may need ongoing mental health services in order to successfully integrate into our community.

**Actions Taken**

Due to our concerns about being able to provide continuing mental health services to inmates released early on NRP status, I have sent the attached letter to representatives of CDCR. The letter requests that the CDCR take adequate steps to ensure that their protocols are followed. DMH staff also continues to contact representatives of CDCR on a regular basis to request referral information.

If you have any questions, or need further information regarding this matter, please contact me at (213) 738-4601 or Robin Kay, Ph.D., at (213) 738-4108.

MJS:RK:tld

c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department